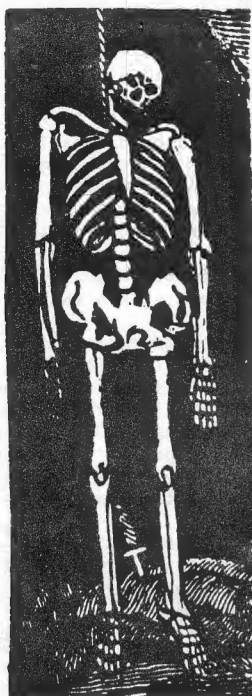
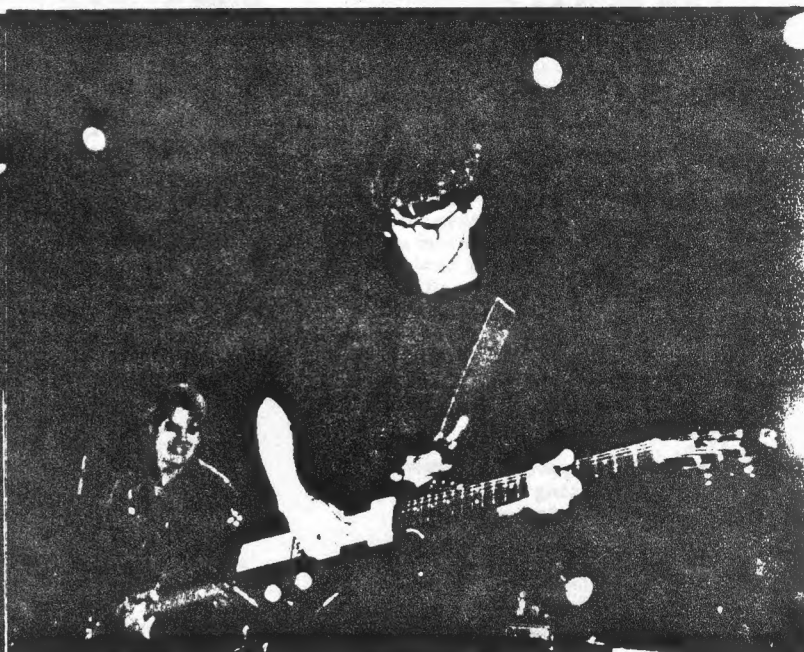


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ARTIFICIAL LIFE

SOME THINGS MATTER !



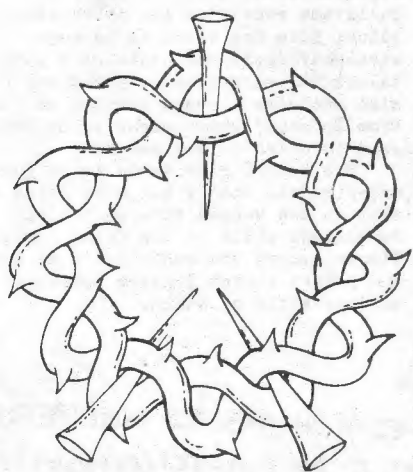
sisters of mercy

captain sensible

flux of pink indians



THE DANSE SOCIETY



cocteau twins

persian flowers

ANNE CLARK



**COLOUR
BOX**

joolz



A FASCINATING ADVENTURE
INTO THE UNKNOWN!

30p



ARTIFICIAL LIFE FANZINE

I hope you've all been waiting in anticipation and excitement for Issue four which again is full of variety... covering bands/artist etc that matter!

This year has seen the category of 'positive punk' appear in the music press...Why does music have to be continually categorised and trends started?—Bands don't just happen; they have to work hard to survive.

There's a lot of positive music around which shouldn't be narrowed down to categories. Once a band are put into a category and are willing to stay there then they're no longer positive.

Once again I have faith in things getting better—Although, on saying that, there are a lot of good bands around...which keeps music as a way of life.

If there are people interested in writing, contributing or even typing the fanzine, write to:—

JAKE
ARTIFICIAL LIFE
BASEMENT FLAT
37a, HILLDROP ROAD
LONDON N7 0JE.

BACK ISSUES:

ISSUE 1

Theatre of Hate, Southern Death Cult, Marine Girls, Gene Loves Jezebel
SOLD OUT.

ISSUE 2

Grass, Sex Gang Children, New Order, The Room and more.....

ISSUE 3

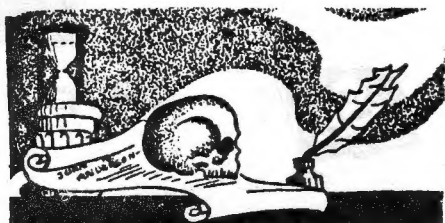
Spear of Destiny, Virgin Prunes, UK Decay, Seething Wells, Brigandage.

The above available for 30p & large SAE.

ATTENTION!!!!

ARTIFICIAL LIFE is in the process of compiling a tape of various bands who have sent tapes and independent singles to the fanzine. If you would like to be included on the tape, send a good quality recorded cassette of your music along with a few details about the band.

It will have 18-20 different bands and will sell through the fanzine for about £1.50. It gives the fanzine room to expand and gives the bands exposure...Let's get back to roots in '83.



ALBUM REVIEWS



FETISCH(4AD)-XMAL DEUTSCHLAND.

Xmal Deutschland are a five-piece German band consisting of four females and one male, whose debut album is both powerful and refreshing.

The music is overpowering with its stomping bass drum intros to each song before the thrashy guitar, swirling keyboards, heavy drumming, melodic bass and distant female vocals tear through each song with a vengeance...Full marks to the production of the band and Ivo(4AD) for giving the album a fresh, crisp sound.

One of the problems is that the lyrics are sung in German but on translating them they can only be described as strange!

However the music more than compensates for any particular communication problem...Songs such as 'Orient', 'Kempfer', 'Youngman', and 'Boomerang' stand out, but after several times of playing each track is a gem with not one duff track on the album.

Having witnessed the band live the songs are even stronger which resulted in the band receiving favourable reactions usually reserved for UK Decay/Sex Gang/SDC at their London dates.

I hope Xmal Deutschland come back to England soon...Meanwhile I'll play one of the most optimistic and uplifting records of 1983 over and over again.

KU CAT TRANCE(RED FLAME)-C.CAT TRANCE

C.CAT TRANCE (pronounced as a stutter) is John Lewis and Nigel Stone who are ex members of Medium.

The first side plays at 45rpm and is two funk based tracks; 'Hypnotised' (an old Tymes number) and 'My Tattoo'. The second side plays at 33rpm and has four tracks influenced by music from the Middle East, particularly Turkey and Syria. This is something new but very interesting as a variety of musical instruments are used and a diversity of music provided. The completely re-worked Chairman of the Board song 'Dancing on a String' is the stand-out track on the album.

Each song seems to have so much going on that the listener is overwhelmed by the imaginary work put into the album. Perhaps C.CAT TRANCE'S music will open the door to other musical cultures and even change people's stagnant attitudes to music. Check it out!



NORTH MARINE DRIVE(CHERRY RED)

BEN WATT

Ben Watt could be considered a wimp! On the other hand I'd rather consider him as a quiet, unassuming chap, playing his music with feeling, passion and conviction. His melodic guitar playing compliments his quiet voice. The lyrics are concerned with personal observations of everyday life, ranging from relationships to visiting places. The guitar playing is similar to Vini Reilly(Duritti Column) which comes across as both simple and effective.

I've never been to 'Boxhill' but after Ben's vivid description of it I sure would like to visit the place...

If you're unfamiliar with Ben's stuff perhaps the single 'Some Things Don't Matter' and 'Boxhill' is a good introduction to a songwriter whose songs are as descriptive as short essays.

This is a fine debut album for someone just out of their teens and I'm sure Ben Watt is going to be considered as a very important songwriter in years to come with his solo material and work with Tracey Thorne.

LAZY WAYS(CHERRY RED)*MARINE GIRLS.

Lazy Ways is the second album from the Marine Girls with their simplistic style of music, full of Tracey's jangly guitar, Jane's melodic bass, percussion and vocals shared by Alice and Tracey singing about love, relationships etc.

The production of Stuart Moxham (ex Young Marble Giants and now in The Gist) results in a much tighter, professional sound and the loss of a certain innocence experienced on their first album 'Beach Party'.

Side two tends to be stronger with their fine single 'Don't Come Back/You Must Be Mad' and an excellent version of 'Fever'.

I like the music of the Marine Girls but after two albums I feel their ideas may become exhausted in the future.

HALFWAY ACROSS THE RAINBOW(RED FLAME) SHINY TWO SHINY.

The rather strange named Shiny Two Shiny are a Liverpool duo; Flo Sullivan (vocals, synth, drum machine) and Robin Surtees (guitars, bass). This mini-album consists of eight tracks consisting of lightweight, electronic songs which are the type of songs that should be in the charts but unfortunately aren't!

The electronic synth/drum machine represents the backbone for Flo Sullivan's sensitive and substantial voice. Side One tends to be more straightforward and hints at a natural talent for songwriting. The first side also includes a cover version of 'Boy From Iponema' which seems to be THE song to cover at the moment.

The second side tends to be more experimental with a bit more noise and echo on the vocals etc. An obvious comparison would be the Young Marble Giants except the music isn't so dark and offers a much lighter approach to this style of music.

SPECIAL THANKS TO HELPERS &
THANKS TO THE THYASTS! (All four of them!)

Captain SENSIBLE

Being a Fanzine that provides a variety of music we decided to interview a real popstar someone who had been to the top (and bottom) of the charts ... someone who the little kids love and the big kids hate ... Captain Sensible was the ideal choice. Captain Sensible has played in The Damned for six years, the only original punk band with any credibility left ... well that was until the Captain pursued a solo career for a while and had a number one single with "Happy Talk", a song from South Pacific which resulted in highly amusing appearances on Top of the Pops. Over a mug of ale in a Wardour Street pub the Captain gave his views on his career, The Damned and life in general.

AL: Didn't you cancel your solo tour because you were ill?

CS: No, that was bullshit!... people weren't buying the tickets (laughs) I cancelled the tour as it would have lost a lot of money. I thought after 'Happy Talk' people would want to see me but obviously they don't ... fuck them!

AL: So it wasn't down to the pressures of being a popstar?

CS: Pressures!... yeah, its hard work (drinks some beer) ... cheers!

AL: What have you been doing recently?

CS: I've been working with The Damned. We've just come back from a tour in Spain.

AL: What was the tour like?

CS: A bit weird ... I hate the food which is really greasy.

AL: What about the audiences?

CS: They're not as good as the English. They don't understand.

AL: A lot of bands seem to think that foreign audiences are more open minded.

CS: One of my main things is that I like to talk to the audience and I like it when they shout back at us, so if they can't understand what you're saying then its not the same. When they shout at us in England its great ... things such as 'Sensible is a wanker!'

AL: You enjoy that do you?

CS: Yes, why not.

AL: Why do you want this image of people being able to hurl abuse at you?

CS: I think its good fun! I don't mind what they do so long as they don't hurt me. I don't care what people say to me ... it doesn't hurt my feelings. I think its funny. The Damned's audience know they can shout at people who are famous. They can shout abuse and know that the group will like it. I don't think people should sit there and clap after every song that's rubbish (laughs)

AL: Why did you decide to pursue a solo career?

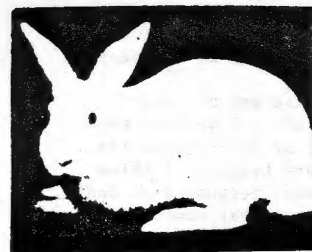
CS: Well The Damned didn't have a record deal for over a year so I was bored. We sacked Chiswick and no one else would touch us because we're dangerous characters or something. No record company wanted to know about us so I had plenty of time to do things so I did an album ... I didn't know at the time.

AL: So you were completely surprised by your success?

CS: Yes, completely.

AL: If you managed to get a record deal why couldn't the band?

CS: I think people reckon The Damned would be inclined to smash or rather The Damned do smash recording studios and The Damned do fight each other and other people. A lot of record companies are frightened of that. I suppose they thought I



SPACEVISION
3D

was the nicest! The pacifist of the band. I mean Rat Scabies has been known to beat people up.

AL: Wasn't Rat rather upset by your success?

CS: Yes, he was jealous. I laughed in his face.

AL: Did you wish that your success had been the success of The Damned?

CS: I never pursued success! It just happened. I didn't demand it. The record just went to number one. I couldn't give a shit where it went. I don't care!

AL: Do you wish tht The Damned had greater success than they have?

CS: No, not really! A lot of groups who get very big split up. I'd rather have The Damned going for six years at the level they are than going for two years and splitting up.

AL: Why do you think The Damned have survived?

CS: We need each other. We get on together most of the time. I like them! I used to work with Rat ... we were cleaners! If I wasn't in a band with him I'd miss him.

AL: It looks as if The Damned are the only original punk band surviving with any credibility.

CS: Yes, thats amazing!

AL: Do you think that punk got watered down by the music business?

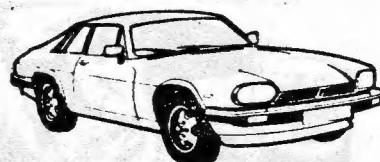
CS: Yes, that's the trouble with getting successful ... You find that people start saying that if you want to continue your success you've got to water down you music or behave in a certain way. I mean that's what happened to The Clash.

AL: Yes, a band that may have had good intentions but just became part of the system.

CS: The Clash were always a bunch of posers who cared more about their clothes than anything else. All this political stuff is a load of bollocks, all they want to do is be rich! All they want to do is be the Rolling Stones.

AL: Yes, they're very close to that! Did you consider punk to be something different or just another phase in music?

CS: I think its good to be able to get clothes that are really cheap from junk shops, put them on and be in the height of fashion. It suits me fine as I like the attitude of punk. I don't like some of the music as a lot of bands sound the same.



AL: What do you think of the current punk bands?

CS: I never liked any of this Bushell stuff. I've lost touch with a lot of it. I like the Anti Nowhere League. I think they're great because they don't give a shit. They remind me of The Damned when they first started. They just don't give a toss, which is excellent. They're really nice blokes as well ... really basic!

AL: At times punk can become disillusioning.

CS: Well maybe the next lot of bands will be good. There's always some little geezer sitting in a bedroom practicing and waiting. He may be the next great punk ... good luck to him! Punk doesn't belong to The Damned but anyone with a guitar who fancies playing in a group.

AL: Why did the band leave Chiswick?

CS: We did a double album which was released in Britain as a double album but everywhere else it was released as a single album and that upset us. Now they've re-released it over here as two single albums. They just want to get people's money. The reason we did a double was the fact that we knew we could do it for the price of a single album. We did it to give people value and now Chiswick have split the album into two ... it's just a con and that's why we left them. It annoys me as people keep complaining to me as Chiswick also keep releasing singles off that album. It's not us but Chiswick. The 'Live at Sheperton' album has been released three times! God knows how they get away with it. What a con! Tell people not to buy it!

AL: Are you happy with Bronze at the moment?

CS: Only time will tell.

AL: The new album seems very musical.

CS: Yes, we've learnt to play our instruments now. Six years ago we were the worst in the world. Six years ago we were the Anti Nowhere League.

AL: Why are the albums and not the live performances musical?

CS: I think you should treat live work different from studio work. On stage I like to have a laugh but in the studio I like to play my instrument as well as I can. On stage I just want to have fun. If I stood still and stayed sober I could play as well as I do on record but I don't want to do that so we just go mad.

AL: Are you surprised that The Damned are still popular?

CS: I don't care that much but it doesn't surprise me as we're original. We're the only group who behave like we do. The world needs a group that are totally unprofessional. There's too many groups that are very good!

AL: Do you think you'll continue to survive?

CS: Yes, we've got no competition ... only the League and we taught them everything they know.

AL: So you'll do this for the rest of your life?

CS: Yes, it seems that way. I hope so ... it's a laugh. I'll even come on stage in crutches.

AL: How did you become involved with CRASS?

CS: Well, I kept seeing people with Crass written next to The Damned on their backs. I bought a Crass album, read the lyrics and thought they were absolutely phenomenal and really believed in what they were saying. I decided to meet them and got hold of their phone number through The Poison Girls and as a result made a single with them. I got on really well with them as they're really nice people.

AL: Would you work with them again?

CS: I'd like to ... if they'll have me! I do phone them up occasionally to see what they're doing. Good luck to them!

AL: Yes, they need luck as they probably go through a lot of hassles and agro which not everyone realises.

CS: I do because The Damned went through it all in the first year when there was no punk and everybody hated it, apart from a hundred fans and two or three bands. We used to get our van windows smashed and tyres slashed. There would be people waiting at the end of the road after a gig with bricks and sticks etc. waiting to beat us up.

AL: Having done the Crass single and appearing as CND rally do you see yourself doing similar things in the future?

CS: Yes, we're doing the CND concert at Brockwell Park in May. On my album there's some good lyrics which are serious ... if you can be bothered to look for them in between 'Happy Talk' and other things.

AL: What do you think you're trying to achieve through your lyrics?

CS: I'm trying to change the world.

AL: Will you succeed?

CS: No, it's firmly entrenched in stupidity!

AL: Paul Grey of The Damned is involved with ARTISTS FOR ANIMALS - are you involved in any way?

CS: I am but to a lesser extent. Paul will probably get The Damned to do some gigs for them but I'll work for them anytime.

AL: There seems to be a growing interest in animal welfare.

CS: Yes, bloody good thing. I think things will change! For far too long people have protested by writing letters to newspapers etc. in a peaceful way but now people are doing it more aggressively and it's working ... it's the same with CND. The Women at Greenham Common are fantastic! If you do it peacefully you'll never achieve anything ... that's where I argue with Crass sometimes. You've got to make your point a little more aggressively!

AL: Is it true that you've got a large psychedelic record collection?

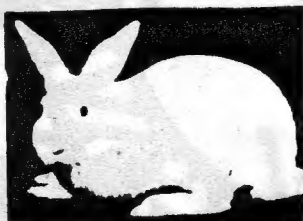
CS: Yes, I like all that stuff but I don't like heavy metal. I like 60's psychedelic groups such as The Electric Prunes, Syd Barrett etc. I don't like all this heavy metal rubbish which has been done before and sounds all the same. The lyrics are really stupid ... 'I'm going to love you all night long baby!' The lyrics are moronic! They're not saying anything ... 'Look at me baby I'm great ... don't you want some of this' I stopped buying records in 1969. I still don't buy any as they stopped making good records in 1969. I never liked heavy metal or glam only some of the punk was alright! I've just got this new album called 'Pretty Ballerina' by The Left Bank ... it's 15 years old and it's the best record I've ever heard. It's got a lot of harpsicord. All these people using synthesisers ... they seem to forget instruments such as harpsicords, oboes, harps, baryos, mouth organs etc... and all they're playing are synthesisers. I should grab hold of a sitar! The Exploited should have sitar on the next album! The Anti Nowhere League should do folk songs! I would still be punk as they'd be doing what they want ... it would be creative! Punk should be creative and not idiotic, sounding the same ... punk should be intelligent! The attitude and lyrics of punk are great but the music is all the same.

AL: Finally how's your pet rabbit?

CS: He's alright. I've put some extra straw in because the weather is getting colder. He's a good animal. I let him into the house ... he's great but keeps chewing my jackplugs and wires for my guitar. He'll chew anything.

AL: What does he think of your guitar playing?

CS: He really gets down on it (laughs)



ANNE CLARK

Anne Clark's poetry tends to be very emotional, melancholy and at times depressing. However, her live performances tend to be positively moving and uplifting as the poetry is strengthened by the use of slides, tapes and keyboards supplied by Anne's friend Dave. Anne, along with Patrik Fitzgerald, Kevin Hewick and John Hollingsworth, forms the nucleus of the 'Ghosts of Individuals'. The idea being that each artist plays a set and the sets make up a concert. The 'Ghosts' have played in Britain and Europe but live performances tend to be flexible as the artists pursue solo projects on their respective record labels etc. Having seen Anne perform several times and being impressed by her debut mini album 'The Sitting Room' (Red Flame Records), ARTIFICIAL LIFE talked to Anne about her poetry.

AL: When did you first start reading and writing poetry?

Anne: I started writing poetry when I was in school and I only really enjoyed Art and English but I couldn't paint very well. I then saw something in the New Musical Express about Paul Weller starting a publishing firm so I sent some stuff to him which he published and after that things really started getting off the ground. My first live thing was at Richard Strange's Cabaret Futura . . . I just went along and did it . . . God knows why!

AL: When did you start working for RIOTSTORIES (Paul Weller's Publishing Firm)?

Anne: It was three or four months after that and I also started doing a few concerts with Patrik Fitzgerald and Attila the Stockbroker. In 1981 I did the Poetry Olympics with Paul Weller.

AL: How would you describe your poetry?

Anne: Miserable! . . . I think poetry sounds such an awful word as people link it with Keats or something. I've always had conflict with myself about doing it. I should be working in a proper job as I don't know if I'm justified to do this . . . but seeing as I'm no good at anything else I'll carry on doing it.

AL: Do you think you'll continue reading poetry to music or will you ever sing?

Anne: Well Dave who works with me is desperately trying to teach me to sing because I'm doing a full length album that includes 'In the year 25, 25'. We're nearly there but I have a strange way of singing which is rather limited.

AL: How did you meet Dave?

Anne: Dave was in a group that organized concerts at The Warehouse Theatre in Croydon which is where I met him. At the time I was using bits of music but he offered to do the music full time. He's a very good musician and has some great ideas.

AL: How do you go about selecting the slide?

Anne: I try and get them to relate to the music . . . some of them are very gruesome. I don't apologise for it because people don't like looking at nasty things and would like to turn a blind eye to things that they shouldn't. I think the theatre or concerts is as good a place as any to make people look at things. If they don't like it they can go to a Bucks Fizz concert.

AL: What inspires you to write?

Anne: Misery, gloom, despair . . . things that people don't usually write about. It's taboo to be sad or unhappy with things you shouldn't ignore these things.

AL: Do you consider yourself melancholy?

Anne: Yes, incredibly so, but witty!

AL: Do you think that what you're saying is what a lot of people think?

Anne: Yes! A lot of people think my work is very self indulgent which it is to a degree, but as well as relating to me, it also relates to other people. Other people feel sad about things. It's not all personal but what I see from other people.

AL: Do you think that by expressing yourself in this way you're helping people who can't express their emotions?

Anne: Yes, hopefully! What I like about my concerts and Patrik Fitzgerald's concerts is that there is always some reaction from people such as 'it was good or that we shouldn't do things like that'. When we played The Rock Garden some guy came up to Patrik and told him that he should change his name as he wasn't the same artist he used to be . . . its incredible . . . you don't change your name everytime you change your job!

AL: What music do you like listening to?

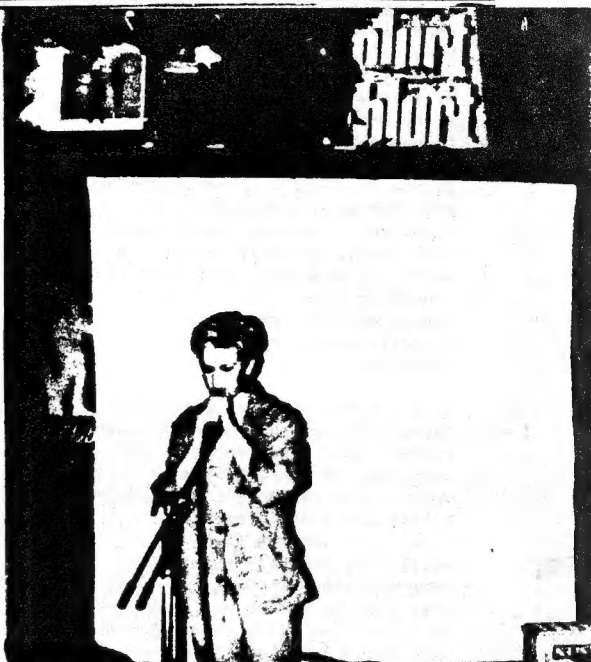
Anne: Dirutti Column, Patrik Fitzgerald . . . electronic stuff such as Jean Michell Jarre, Yazoo, Culture Club . . .

AL: What about books?

Anne: There are two books that I really like 'Walter' and 'Winter Doves' by David Cook. They're incredible and so simply written. I also like the existentialist writers and the Pre-Raphaelite painters.

AL: How did you become involved in the 'Ghosts of Individuals'?

Anne: I've known Patrik Fitzgerald for years as he's my favourite songwriter and I used to go to loads of his concerts. I told him that I wrote and it all fell together when Patrik met John Hollingsworth and Kevin Hewick. John tends to be the main force behind it and does all the donkey work.



AL: The idea behind 'Ghosts' is that you're all solo artists doing a set each rather than being put on in between bands.

Anne: Yes that's right. It's pretty heavy going for people.

AL: Some solo artists think that performing to a rock audience is O.K.

Anne: Well I remember Paul Weller putting on a really good poet Aiden Cant at one of their concerts. The audience just jeered at him and threw cans. Of course The Dickies then came on and everybody danced because it was a band and it's people's only idea of what entertainment is! . . . anything else demands too much concentration!

AL: Do you enjoy doing live work?

Anne: No, I don't enjoy gigs that much. I like performing but I don't know if I've got the right to make people listen to miserable depressing music. I think the idea of music is to communicate to people and get them to react to each other, preferably for the better. The music papers are always slagging someone off and saying that what they are doing is wrong which makes entertainment and concerts redundant.

AL: The music papers are in a powerful position.

Anne: Everybody hates them and everybody still reads them. Even I read them but I don't read reviews of concerts and records. Music keeps a lot of people sane and I think people must accept that there is a variety of music. I think my stuff and Patrik's is in the minority and I'd like to see things change but being the eternal pessimist I don't know!



AL: There are rumours that you're involved with a film for television.

Anne: Over a year ago I met this group of people called 'Youth T.V.' who asked me if I was interested in writing a script. However they ripped off Channel 4 and took a lot of money and got into trouble for it. Channel 4 liked my idea which is being carried on by Dominic Shaw who filmed 'Rough Cut' and 'Ready Dubbed' with Stiff Little Fingers, Patrik etc. It's called "SKETCH FOR SOMEONE - ISOLATION" and is a collage of music, images and a thin storyline which people can watch and hopefully gain or feel something from. There's very little on television that actually makes you feel something.

AL: Have you had any work published?

Anne: Faber have just put out this book called "Hardlines" which is an anthology of young people's work. This came about when Paul Weller and I did 'Something Else'. We went to the publishers and said that there were no books by young people so they put the book together which is quite good but I think it's a very token gesture. It's not done in the way I'd like it . . it's all very well polished and big. You can tell when publishers are going to town on a young person's book it's either six foot wide or in large print. They seem to think that young people are incapable of reading a normal sized book.

AL: You've released a mini album on Red Flame - How did that come about?

Anne: I did a concert at The Rock Garden and Dave Kitson of Red Flame, who had already signed Patrik Fitzgerald, said that he liked my work and that I should put a record out. He booked the studio time and it was done really quickly. It was a bit of an experiment but I was pleased with some of it.

AL: Do you think the mini album is a good idea?

Anne: Yes I do . . . You get people putting albums out and you can tell that three of the tracks are fillers. Carmel's mini album worked really well.

AL: You're going to do a full length album aren't you?

Anne: Yes, hopefully with Dave and Vini Reilly of Dirutti Column.

AL: How did you meet Vini?

Anne: I've always gone to his concerts as I think his music is incredible. Kevin Hewick had done some concerts with him and so I met him after one of his concerts and just asked if he'd like to do one track. He agreed to do more than one track and so long as Dave Kitson of Red Flame and Tony Wilson of Factory agree, Vini will be doing the backing on the album.

AL: Do you see your style changing in the future?

Anne: Yes, I like to keep changing. The live stuff is a lot different from what's on record. There's disco stuff, semi classical, dirges, poppy stuff etc. Poetry is quite a narrow field and rather limiting so it's nice to bring in music as much as possible.

"The Power Game"

I've been sitting here all day trying to understand why people want to rule each other when the problem's close at hand

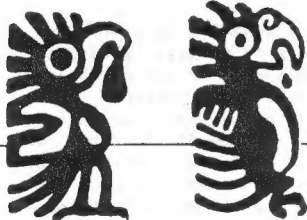
A little less of what you want and more of what you've got is enough to keep you struggling without hatching other plots

But justify yourself
Don't staisfy yourself
You should be out there voting
say the power mongers gloating

The left wing rich
(Trying to shed their guilt)
Go knocking down dreams
before they're even built

Don't tell me how to live my life
Don't tell me what to do
Repression is always brought about
by people with politics
and attitudes like you!

© ANNE CLARK.



COLOUR BOX



BREAKDOWN





COLOUR BOX



We've got our 'phone number on the back of the first version of the single...it's better, you just have to 'phone and we're there!

Martyn: It was a good move. Groups that put out indie releases should always do that. If we hadn't the record companies would have 'phoned 4AD and Ivor might have

put them off, He won't put our 'phone number on the new version. We wanted him to put 'parties' and then the 'phone number on the original but he wouldn't!

A.L: Why don't you put your address on like other bands, because you're bound to get a loony phoning up?

Ray: It will be amusing if we get a crank! We had a person from Holland who rung up last week. It's really funny...all the other 4AD groups get tons of mail and we get none!



The Holly Bush pub in Hamstead, one Saturday lunchtime, found ARTIFICIAL LIFE interviewing / chatting to three members of a brilliant new band, Colour Box and their manager. The band's first single "Breakdown" (4AD) appeared in the indie chart at number 28 and they received critical acclaim in the shape of a David 'Kid' Jensen session for Radio One.

Those present were, Ian Robbins (synth, keyboards); Martin Young (synth, keyboards); Steve Biggs (synth, bass); and Ray the talkative and intelligent manager of Colour Box and also Modern English. Vocalist Debian Curry was absent due to previous commitments. Here's what happened...

COLOUR BOX FORMATION

Ian: Well, we've known each other for years. Martyn and I used to go to school together and he and Steve are brothers.

Martyn: We met Debian through a guy she was going out with... who was in the band. When they split up in September he left he took his synth with him, so we've been without any gear which makes it difficult for us to write any music.

Artificial Life: How did you get your name?

Martyn: From a film.

Ian: It's fairly nondescript...It doesn't conjure up visions of anything.

THE 4AD CONNECTION

Ian: Ray, our manager, took a demo of "Putting on the Ritz" and "Breakdown" to 4AD and they got hooked on "Breakdown".

Ray: The demo was really crap. It's funny that Ivor (of 4AD) liked it because most of the music on 4AD is really dark and doomy.

A.L: Given the chance, would you move to a major label?

Ian: Well, we know 4AD and we got on with Ivor. The question is.....can they give us enough money to stay? (laughs)

A.L: Didn't they give you £3,000 worth of synth - Jupiter 8, as reported in Sounds?

Ian: They didn't!...that was part of the deal when we were going to sign a two year contract with 4AD but just before Christmas, we started getting calls from, and entered into negotiations with majors.

A.L: Who for instance?

Ray: E.M.I., C.B.S., Chrysalis, Phonogram, Arista on the strength of "Breakdown" and the Kid Jensen session.

A.L: Why re-do the single?

Ray: We were asked to by 4AD and because we're in-between signing to record companies. We've got nothing to do! We couldn't really do another song for Ivor/4AD because it would sod up our chances of signing to a major.

COLOUR BOX ON MUSIC

Ian: I'd like to go to the U.S.A. because the music is better. If you're English and play vaguely electronic music, you've got it made. When Ray went over there, he taped a lot of the heavy funk radio stations. There are so many different markets.

Ray: There are a lot of funk bands over there who are using drum machines, synths....in the right way.

A.L: Why didn't you like "Buffalo Gals" by Malcolm McLaren, Ian?

Ian: It wasn't that I didn't like it, but I don't like McLaren.

Martyn: I didn't like the way that they said it was scratching... a lot of it wasn't.

Ian: Now that he's made it a fashionable thing...it's going to die out in about six months. If anyone tries to do anything like that, people are going to say, "Oh, he's ripped off McLaren."

Martyn: He tried to make it sound easy.

Ray: He spends 1,000's of pounds doing it the studio and then he says "Look, this is what they're doing in the streets"It's a joke!....Everyone's in the music biz for the money.

A.L: Maybe some are in it for pleasure, fame and being looked upon as someone who creates good music.

Ian: I would be really dishonest to say money didn't come into it at all.

COLOUR BOX AND THE BEEB

A.L: What was it like at the B.B.C.?

Ian: Bloody awful! We only had equipment the week before and we had to write four songs in that week which meant staying up through the night to finish them. Also the night before the recording we went to a party and got really pissed! When we got to the Beeb, we were totally wrecked! (laughs) The in-house producer, Dale Griffin, ex Mott the Hoople, didn't take to us.

Martyn: And he wore cowboy boots! (Hysterical laughter all round)



COLOUR BOX ON SOUNDS

Martyn: We've found out what it's like for groups to do interviews. We didn't like the way the Sounds interview was put together because some of the answers we gave were actually to different questions. He (Dave Henderson) was trying to make us some sort of fun group. There was an article in Jaws about us... "The CARDY FUNSTERS".... I just didn't like that!

Ray: The people from Sounds are smelly little creeps! (agreement came in the form of more hysterical laughter). I just don't know how they got their jobs.

COLOUR BOX ON THEMSELVES

A.L.: Have you been in any other bands?

Ian: (Embarrassed) No!

Martyn: Yes we have! We used to be in a band called Baby Patrol.

A.L.: What sort of music was it?

Martyn: Terrible! (laughs) Steve was in a band called The Nobodies. Colour Box isn't really a band! The only thing that keeps us together is "Breakdown".

Ian: Writing the songs comes naturally, our inspiration comes from the fact that we have to write. If we weren't doing this we'd probably stay in bed like millions of other people. I wouldn't know how to describe our music.

A.L.: Sounds described it as 'electro-funk' and compared it to 'The The', 'Eurythmics',....

Ian: Yeah, I couldn't understand that at all.

A.L.: Do you read any books?

Steve: The last book I read was by Kurt Vonnegut. I don't read by authors, though, just by covers!

A.L.: Did you have a job before Colour Box, Steve?

Steve: Yes, I used to be a postman. The trouble is I'd like a job where I can have a day off three times a week.

Unfortunately, they didn't agree with me and I got the sack! (laughs)

Martyn: We don't want to do gigs because it would look stupid... three blokes behind keyboards with a girl singer at the front... it's not very interesting to watch.

A.L.: Maybe your fans would like to see you to hear the music live rather than on record.

Martyn: I don't know! I didn't know we had any fans!

A.L.: Martyn, you have, as sales and response to "Breakdown" shows and I'm sure people look forward to hearing more of Colour Box in the months to come.

INTERVIEW: MARCIA O'DEAN.



PERSIAN FLOWERS

I saw Persian Flowers at the Moon-Light in March. It was refreshing to stumble across another 'real' band who obviously don't intend to fetter themselves with those crippling chains of disposable pop. On the contrary... I got a very caring sense of 'don't care' off them.

The set included a cover of Patti Smith's 'Dancing Barefoot' every bit as passionate as the original. Their own material has that same elusive quality of brave fragility... From the sensuous melancholy of 'On The Edge' to the desperate charm of 'Summer of Love'.

An evening in singer Nick Nicole's subterranean red room with guitarists Kev and Martin produced the following insights.....

KEV: Martin and I were writing songs in a band called Fear of the Dark. We never really got along with the people in the band and we were losing enthusiasm. We knew Nick from when he was in Wasted Youth. We talked a lot and got the idea of Nick singing so we wrote a few songs with Nick in mind.

MARTIN: We brought ideas with us and a few songs.

AL: Why the name Persian Flowers?

KEV: We all liked those words... There's no heavy meaning.

AL: What are the lyrics about?

KEV: We all write lyrically and all have our own ideas.

NICK: It's quite abstract really. It's different things to different people. It's better if you don't spell it out. If we say what a song's about it might take away what people may feel about it.

MARTIN: There shouldn't be any bounds

AL: You mentioned that personalities more important than musicianship... So what do you have in common?

NICK: The way we live. We like the same kind of music and people... It makes everything so much easier as a lot of things can go unsaid.

MARTIN: It's like a bond really.

KEV: A good atmosphere is very important.

AL: What is it that motivates you?

MARTIN: It's an artistic thing, a sense of creativity.

KEV: When you're young... some people want to work in a bank; I've always wanted to be in a band. It sounds really arty but it's the only way I've found to express myself.

AL: Would you care if the way you were expressing yourself was great but wasn't selling?

NICK: No, we wouldn't dramatically change what we do. If you're good you'll get somewhere in the end.

MARTIN: It takes time to get across ideas, to get inside minds.

AL: Is music to you a quest or a career?

KEV: I feel down if I'm not actually playing or writing.

NICK: You have to live it... You can't just do it at weekends.

AL: What stops a band getting past a certain stage?

MARTIN: People.

NICK: People in a band ought to want it more than anything else in the world. If they don't it can fail.

KEV: We're all unemployed. You can't have the security of a job and be in a band.

MARTIN: There's no middle ground.

AL: What gets you through poverty and frustration?

NICK: What pulls you through is the band. I couldn't live without music. That pulls me along and the people you meet through it. I know we aren't wasting our time.





AL: What about the practicalities like money?

NICK: In Wasted Youth we had someone behind us who put money into us and that made it easier at first but in the end we paid for it with three years of our lives. Most musicians know nothing about money and business.

MARTIN: There are the businessmen against vulnerable kids...People with dreams.

NICK: It's only the dreamers of the world that make any changes.

AL: But don't dreamers get walked on?

KEV: Dreams keep you sane.

AL: Do you identify with anything going on in music at the moment?

NICK: I don't feel there's much happening. This year the only bands I thought were any good were First Priority and Gene Loves Jezebel.

AL: What do you listen to?

KEV: Things from childhood...Lou Reed, Bowie...I always go back to the late sixties, unless you're talking about Joy Division. If you look at bands now there's no feeling.

MARTIN: It's all so cold and twenty-four track.

NICK: There's no atmosphere.

AL: The atmosphere seemed almost psychedelic when I saw you... I don't mean 'far out' or anything, but that feeling.

KEV: That's a compliment; we like to create that kind of atmosphere.

NICK: It's in your head. You can't explain it; You have to feel it.

KEV: But the word 'psychedelic' gives the wrong idea.

MARTIN: It suggests a revival thing- which we aren't.

AL: How do you want to effect people?

NICK: I want to make them laugh or cry, love or hate it...I know it sounds corny, but that's what I want to do.

MARTIN: Although entertainment is a dirty word we aim to entertain as well as ask questions.

NICK: Good music either moves you emotionally or makes your feet tap. Either it makes your head or your feet move...If it doesn't do either, then it's no good.

KEV: How did you feel?

AL: My head danced.

KEV: I get a lot of soul and passion from it.

NICK: I can't word it. It's a feeling I get, different vibes all the time And I'm happy with what I get.

AL: How much of yourselves are you giving?

KEV: We put our lives in front of people. If you're honest, like us, you open right up...Your insides spill out...I can't stand people criticizing you for that.

NICK: The music press can pass off your honesty in one sentence. They talk as if they know more about what you're doing than you know yourself.

KEV: It's our lives on the line..Can you imagine us, the way we look, four years unemployed, trying to get a job?

NICK: Me, and all of us back in Wasted Youth, did it without a second thought because we wanted it so much and knew that's where our destiny lay. We know Persian Flowers are good enough and will survive.

KEV: That's the arrogance that comes across. You always find a reason to carry on. It's so natural for me to want to play... I don't care about the money and how long it's going to take.

AL: Any last words?

NICK: I'd just like to make it clear that Persian Flowers is not just me with a backing band. We are a band and Kev and Martin have written most of the songs. It's not fair to them or me that I should be 'ex-Wasted Youth' for the rest of my life...I hope to transcend that.

Belief is a lot to ask when bands are always coming on as the next great hope, acting out the part... but when they take off their masks there's a very ugly transparency about them....With Persian Flowers there is no mask....So if you've got faith to spare and need something to believe in.....

INTERVIEW: EMMA PEEL

SINGLES REVIEW

Many bands seem to improve on their follow-up releases...For example -'On Earth and in Heaven'(SRR) by Basingstoke band Scarlet Alive is such an improvement on their first single. With new singer Bryan Wrightson, who can actually sing, the band have been given a new lease of life resulting in a well-paced musical song full of melodic rhythm and over-dubbed guitar.

'Foxhunt', a cassette single (Stick In Your Ear Tapes) by Southampton band Look Back In Anger is also a strong follow-up single. The subject of the song is very topical and if you like musical energy you'll like this band. Having a female singer means they'll be compared to other bands more easily but having seen them live, I'd say they were one of the best bands around.

Gene Loves Jezebel are one of the most under-rated bands to have been around for quite a while. There have been several line-up changes in the band which has resulted in a much harder sound on 'Screaming/So Young' (Situation Two). The voices of Mike and Jezebel seem stronger than ever and the music is both disciplined and positive...even the screaming of Kim. The more you play both sides, the more you realise how great it is... I hope their time has come.

'Breakdown' by Colour Box (4AD) is the new re-mixed disco version of the single released last year...It's produced by Mike Glossop of Southern Death Cult fame and the result is a great dance mix that should be played in discos everywhere and marks a brighter direction for 4AD which is boosted further by...
....The Cocteau Twins 'Peppermint Pig' which starts with a heavy disco drum beat of a drum machine before a musical extravaganza complimented by the dream-like vocals of Liz that lift you higher and higher.

The Moodists are an Australian four-piece band whose debut single 'The Disciples Know' (Red Flame) proves that there's life in Australia after the Birthday Party. The single speeds along with powerful drumming and thrashy guitar, good vocals etc.... making rather aggressive rhythms,

Once again The Nightingales come up with the funniest song titles- 'Urban Ospreys/Cakehole' (Cherry Red) which means it's difficult to take the band seriously. The Nightingales are a bit of a thrash but there are melodies in there and good lyrical content which makes this their best single to date.

'Warehouse Sound' (Gymnasium) by the Happy Refugers is a predominantly slow, haunting single with a nice simple sound to the instruments and with the unusual drum sound gives it a 60's feel.

Courtiers of Fashion hail from Coventry and their single 'The Courtiers of Fashion' is based around compositions of the past and feature orchestrated sounds of lutes, cellos and flutes etc but with an electronic keyboard base, while the male/female vocalists sing about gallant knights rescuing ladies trapped in castles.... Make of it what you can!

Finally, Essex-based I'm Dead release their debut single 'The Sentence/Second Identity' which has a rather eerie sound which takes you to hell and back with strange guitar effects and unnerving vocals...the dark side of optimism.

LOOK BACK IN ANGER

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flux of pink indians



FLUX OF PINK INDIANS alongside the other anarchist punk bands have taken a stand through their records and live gigs in making people aware of things such as nuclear weapons, the killing of animals for meat, animal welfare etc. The band believe in peace and freedom, resulting in a large following with similar ideas.

The band released one single "New Smell" on Crass Records before forming their own Spiderleg Records which has released records by The Subhumans, Amekix, The System and earlier Flux material when they were called The Epileptics.

The band's first album "Strive to Survive Causing Least Suffering Possible" was finally released. It is powerful in both music and messages which makes it an essential release of 1983.

We decided to ask Flux some questions about their music and ideas.

AL: After several changes in the band, is the line up now settled?

FLUX: Our guitarist Kev Hunter left the band just before Christmas but we found replacements for him in two guitarists: Tim and Lou. After extensive rehearsals we now consider our line up is settled. Flux now are:
Colin - vocals
Derek - bass
Martin - drums
Tim - guitar
Lou - guitar

AL: Why has it taken the band so long to bring out a record on Spiderleg?

FLUX: Due to many reasons really - not least being the past changes in line-up. Where we'd be all set to record and then lose one of our members and then have to rehearse new people. Our new 12" single "Strive to Survive" was actually recorded in May 1982 and was set for release in August but then we had a lot of setbacks with the artwork, pressing and printing etc. It has now been released and we're happy with it.

AL: How is Spiderleg financed and organised?

FLUX: Spiderleg is run mainly through John Loder and Southern Studios at Wood Green.

AL: Are you worried about being stereotyped as a Crass type band and living under their shadow?

FLUX: No, as it doesn't bother us what people want to classify us as, because we all work together and are striving for the same things. Also if people think 'we live in their shadow' they are obviously the sort of people who have never listened to anything we've said and they wouldn't be likely to give us a chance in any case.

AL: Where did you get your logos from and what meanings do they have?

FLUX: The Flux bird was a design originally found by Colin and then quite by accident he found out that it meant 'a bird of peace' in Indian legend.

Ⓔ stands for existential which is a form of anarchy meaning for a person to live and exist in total freedom. He/she must be a caring and responsible human being. Other signs we use are ☒ which stands for Anti-War and ☢ which is the nuclear symbol. Also the skull which means 'Reaper of Death'.

AL: What is your policy over gigs? Are you worried about becoming too popular to play small cheap venues?

FLUX: We will not play a gig over £1.50. We disagree with bouncers, high bar prices, restrictions etc. which is why we will not play places such as The Lyceum. We play smaller places more than one night e.g. two nights at Fulham Greyhound with different support bands each night. The place holds about 300 people so doing two nights means that anyone that wants to see us should be able to do so. Of course, being licensed premises a lot of younger ones can't get in but we often play places that don't have bars e.g. ZIG ZAG SQUAT GIG.

AL: Do you think that punk is still a worthwhile movement? What music do you listen to?

FLUX: Yes of course, as the way we look at it, punk is a rejection of the system and it always will be. It is definitely growing as more and more people become vegetarian/anti-war etc. and join in with us. Each member of Flux listens to punk - Crass, Dirt, Conflict, Discharge but also like other kinds of music. We also enjoy listening to the various bands that support us.

AL: Are you members of CND? Do you think that disarmament can succeed where it failed in the 1960's?

FLUX: No we are not as we like to do things in our way. If people feel better actually belonging to a recognised organisation such as CND then that's fine and up the individual. Working for nuclear disarmament can be done in so many ways, we are just "spreading the word" in our own way, but as we are ultimately reaching for the same goal, if we succeed then it will have been worthwhile. I don't feel it's a case of disarmament failing in the 60's but that that the campaign for nuclear disarmament 20 years on, is stronger and as more people

become aware, changes are more likely to become a reality.

AL: As vegetarians what are your favourite types of food?

FLUX: We eat a lot of cheese in various disguises! Also jacket potatoes, vegetable stews etc. Martin's girlfriend is putting a little recipe book together which should be ready in a month or so!

AL: What advice would you give to people who agree with not eating meat in principle but who find it difficult to give up?

FLUX: If you take the average, ordinary meat-eaters meal e.g. roast beef, roast potatoes, yorkshire pud, 2 veg etc... only one item of that meal is meat so therefore it's the easiest to replace. People think if you give up meat you have to suddenly start eating rice, nut rissoles, salads etc. all the time and this is so silly! There is no reason why you still can't enjoy the 'roast' dinners (yorkshire pud etc) as before. If you want a meat substitute you can buy things at Health Food Shops such as rissole/burger mixes, soya mince, soya chicken cubes etc....or a slice of cheese and egg flan or pizza with the veg makes a delicious meal! There's really no excuse! The other thing is to say to people to think carefully when they eat meat.... What it really is and to think of the suffering they have caused that animal to go through when it really wasn't necessary at all. It's bound to be hard at first but once you do become a vegetarian you honestly do wonder how you could have eaten meat in the first place. To become a vegetarian all you need to do is modify your existing diet you do not need to drastically change your eating habits 100%.



STRIVE TO SURVIVE CAUSING LEAST SUFFERING POSSIBLE

AL: Do you accept that the same messages as expressed by you can be put forward successfully by other musical mediums other than punk?

FLUX: Obviously that would be good but take disco/funk type music people usually like this music to dance to etc. and the words don't really count in this sort of music. On the other hand if we did try to put our news in a more commercialised style of music could you really see Radio 1 (not John Peel's show) playing "Sick Butchers" or see us on Top of the Pops doing "They Lie, We Die" with our banners in the background!

AL: Do you still live in the hope of things improving in this country and the world, despite things getting worse?

FLUX: Of course, surely we all live in hope of things improving. We've seen how the governments so called help has tried to solve world problems and more often than not only succeed in making matters worse, so we must all be positive and do whatever we can to change our world and make it a better place for everyone to live

"Let's work together as individuals and make peace a reality today."



ALL THE
ARMS
WE
NEED

sisters of mercy

The Sisters of Mercy come close to being a garage band with their cover versions of songs by the Stooges, Rolling Stones and Dolly Parton.....

Perhaps they should be considered on a wave of their own, The music includes a drum machine, the bass playing of Craig Lurch Adams who stands at the back of the stage in leather jacket, ripped jeans, chewing gum. The lizard-like Andy sings, chews gum and smokes...his voice is haunting and powerful as his black-clad figure coils around the microphone. On either side of him are guitarists Ben and Gary, producing a variety of guitar riffs as they move back and forth in their respective territories. Their lyrics offer gloom but beneath that the band have a sense of humour and for some reason the music is happy and uplifting.

The Sisters hail from Leeds and are gaining a lot of attention on their trips down from the North....The guitarists, Gary and Ben talked to Artificial Life after one of their gigs at the Ace in Brixton.

AL: How long have the group been together?

GARY: With this line-up, two records and soon to be three. 'Alice' was the first the group made. On the first record it was me and Andy, then Craig joined us for 'Body Electric'.

AL: Yet you've always been called 'Sisters of Mercy'...

GARY: Yes even before I joined. Andy used to drum and work at the F club in Leeds and it was just him with a band that changed every week.

AL: It seems very confusing...Already you've got a family tree.

BEN: It's been about 15 months evolving.

GARY: We pick up all these young kids who are out of work you see (Looks at Ben and laughs).

AL: Where does the name 'Sisters of Mercy' come from?

GARY: I don't think fanzine readers would appreciate where it came from.

BEN: It was a 'shock-horror-probe' in the Sun which said 'Sisters of Mercy' and it had this great bit about how the nuns had killed someone or how someone had died in a convent under suspicious circumstances.

GARY: So we thought mmmmmmm! The name belongs to Andy because he's got skinny legs.

AL: Why do you think so many bands are coming out of the North?

GARY: I don't know! People haven't got anything here in London so they're scraping the barrel.

BEN: They decided that this is where we're living, man! We've got to meet the press.

GARY: It's true...a hub of talent! (laughs) You must think it's a great place and nice to live but as far as gigs go and bands it's not that startling.

BEN: Three bands in the whole of Britain, excluding London, isn't exactly a hot bed of creativity.

GARY: Little Brother is the best thing to come out of Leeds.

BEN: You should see The Negatives.

AL: Despite whether you like it or not, you've been linked with all the bands coming out-Do you think such a movement exists?

GARY: All this ideal punk doesn't exist as far as I'm concerned. The best thing that ever happened to us was not being included in that positive punk article.... It would have been the kiss of death. Anyway, so long as it never hinders us from doing 'Jolene'...Even the Sex Gang Children said Dolly Parton had some good tunes.

AL: It's unfortunate that you will be linked with other bands.

GARY: I don't think it's unfortunate, it hasn't changed our attitude to anything...We still do what we want and so long as people accept that every song won't be a ramalong and all the rest of it.

AL: Why did you decide to set up your own label?

GARY: There was nothing there in the beginning. No-one was going to take on a band that had only two songs that made up the first single. No-one would have paid money for it so we did it and put it out. It was like putting an ad in the music papers.

AL: Why have you continued with Merciful Records?

GARY: We can do what we want. Isn't that what punks are supposed to do? There's no point in doing it any other way if you don't need to. We haven't got that big an audience to need a major.

AL: Do you think record companies won't bother with you because you're from up North?

GARY: It's not that at all. There are some sniffing around!

BEN: Mainly up there own arses!

GARY: It's the type of business where if someone says they're interested and 'they're a good band' then everybody thinks it is and they fall over themselves trying to get in touch with you.

AL: You did have the March Violets on Merciful-What happened?

GARY: You said it...We did have the March Violets. It started off as a very nice thing. They put up their own money and had a single in the independant charts before us. They used our own hard work as



NO MERCY

it was an established name. We did a few gigs together and it could have continued like that. The money we would have split and we could have shared equipment but it just went sour. I daresay in a few weeks time we'll be great buddies again and we'll say 'your new single is really great' and they'll say 'your new single is really great'.

AL: Will you continue the label?

GARY: Yes, for the band, but there's no definite plan to what we do. It doesn't mean we want to get flooded with demo-tapes. The idea is good but it's a question of watching bands.

AL: Do you see yourselves signing to a major?

BEN: Well we'd like to get the label licensed by a major.

GARY: We'd like a certain lifespan for the label. We've certainly got a few more years yet.

AL: What do you think of the indies at the moment?

GARY: 'No Future' seem to get plenty of records in the top 100. There are plenty of people buying records. They are actually doing things in a business way rather than doing a thousand singles which doesn't do anybody any good.

AL: A lot of the indies try to be mini-majors to run in an economic way.

BEN: There's no point in doing it any other way.

GARY: You've got to run a business as best you can.

BEN: To compete you've got to sell as many records as you can. The idea of going to a major is to get some money... Take the money and run.

GARY: There are a lot of pitfalls in not having control over the release of your records.

AL: Yes, even bands who think they'll have control over their records get their ideas watered down e.g. The Clash.

GARY: I don't know. Everybody slags off the Clash but they've always had good tunes.

BEN: They still write good songs. 'Combat Rock' was brilliant.. With songs like 'Rock The Casbah', 'Should I Stay or Should I Go'.

GARY: Joe Strummer wrote 'White Man In Hammersmith Palais' which was one of the greatest songs of all time. You've got to thank him for something like that even if he has turned out.....

BEN: Stupid haircut!

AL: Who writes the songs in your group?

GARY: The music is usually started with Andy and lyrically it's Andy. In some cases he doesn't write the melody at all.

BEN: In one particular instance Craig wrote all the melody to 'Floorshow' ... a great riff.

GARY: There are no set rules to it. For example, 'Anaconda' is bits of me and bits of the others.

AL: What inspires Andy to write lyrics?

BEN: He gets really stoned!

GARY: No he doesn't.. That's untrue.

BEN: Very sharp man,... A very sharp fellow.

GARY: He doesn't go out.

BEN: No Andy doesn't go out. He's inspired by his psyche!

GARY: He's one of life's great observers. The lyrics are... I was going to say self-explanatory but quite a lot of them are not. The words are there... It doesn't take a great effort to understand them.. There are meanings to the songs. He's not your average sort of singer.

The conversation drifts around the subject of what inspires Andy to write.

AL: Is Andy the dominant force in the band?

GARY: He's got a strong personality but I wouldn't say he was the dominant force as everybody does their bit.

AL: Why do you use a drum-machine?

BEN: It drinks less! Doesn't take up as much room in the van... Quite valid reasons!

AL: Do you think it's limiting in any way?

GARY: Not at all. It gives you much more freedom than a drummer. If you go totally bananas there's no way a drummer can keep up.

BEN: You've got to keep around the structure of the drum-machine but that's no limitation as the songs are structured that way.

AL: Do you think you'll ever use a drummer? Echo and the Bunnymen started out with a drum-machine.

BEN: No I can't see us using one.

GARY: Nor can I. The Bunnymen were really weak without a drummer.

BEN: The reason the Bunnymen got a drummer was because Korova insisted when they signed that they got a drummer. Obviously we feel we don't need one at the moment but perhaps one day we may feel differently.

AL: You seem to play regularly. How much importance do you place on live gigs?

GARY: Quite a lot.

BEN: It's pretty pointless doing the stuff we do and not doing live gigs.

GARY: It is very much adrenalin music so it is important. Listening to the record you don't really get the sense of why... but if you come

and see the band you get some sort of explanation of the band in the way we act. Perhaps it's not so gloomy as the records suggest. A record lasts forever so you can't do something totally ridiculous on the record because in that you're telling people what you stand by whereas live you can do anything as it's forgotten straight after. If you want to play a country song then you can play a whole set of country and western songs.

BEN: Sometimes it's quite fun as well. You travel all over the place up and down the M1.

GARY: In the studio nothing actually happens but live someone can say 'that's great' there and then by clapping or dancing. We played Birmingham not so long ago and it was the greatest gig of all time. It was like the band and audience as one.

BEN: A stage invasion and Gary jumped into the audience and Craig smashed his bass up.

AL: So you approve of audience participation?

GARY: Well I like to see some people sort of smiling back!

AL: Why did you decide to cover 'Jolene'?

GARY: It's a good song!

BEN: It fits the structure of how we like to write songs.

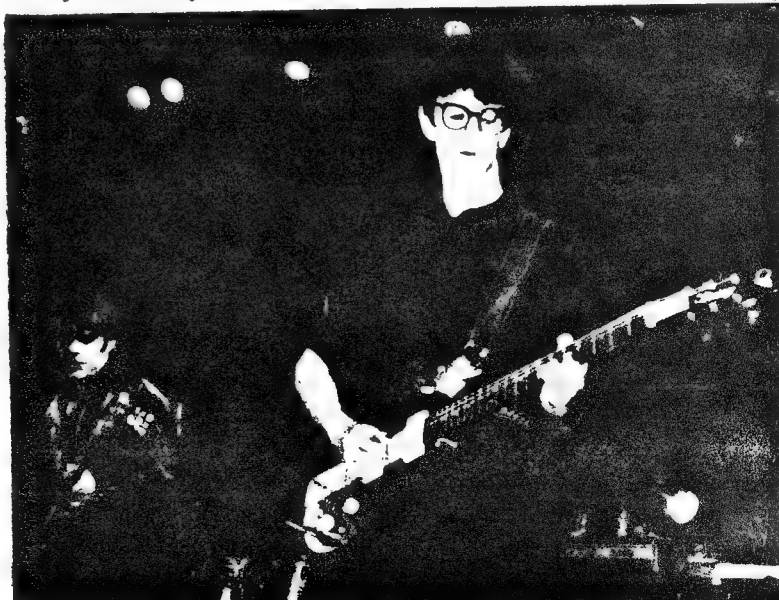
GARY: We wanted to do some new covers. We didn't discard that because it was done by Dolly Parton. It was a bold choice and we're very pleased with it.

BEN: It's good watching people react to it.

GARY: You get all these people who pretend they're punk rockers and they only like certain things... They're just narrow-minded. You are going to be considered stupid because you play Jolene. We're just telling people to stop re-writing songs such as 'people in the street stop me because my hair looks neat.'

BEN: That's a good song.

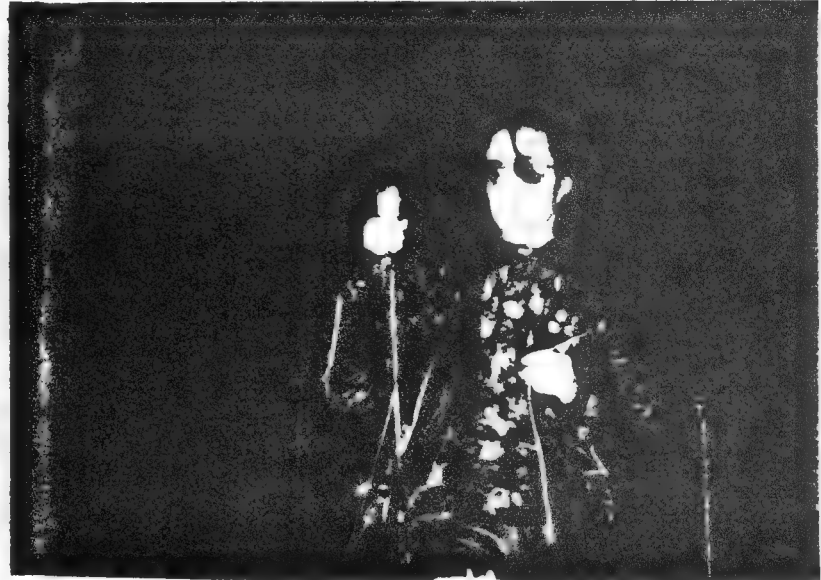
GARY: To think of punk as being great and everything else is crap.... That attitude doesn't exist with us.



AL: What are your future plans?
 BEN: There'll be an E.P. coming out a 5-track 12" in Japan on picture disc and will be available here for £6.
 GARY: No, the next single will have a funny b-side and the E.P. will have a funny a and b-side. It's like getting a few things over. In the past few months there's been an obsession with cowboys and Indians and at the time we had a lot of good things that we'd done before and didn't want to put out because of that. We've got spaghetti Western type music!

AL: Who does the artwork?
 GARY: ...The original logo is Andy's. The single covers are always ripped off and copied off something.
 AL: You haven't been sued yet??
 BEN: No they're all dead.
 GARY: The first cover was really famous and we didn't get done. The person who did the second cover saw it and didn't object. The third one the person is dead and for the fourth we could have a competition...see if the readers can guess (laughs).
 (The conversation is not very serious from this point on).
 AL: Anything else you'd like to say?
 BEN: How about our plans for world domination?
 AL: What about them.
 BEN: Well at the moment they're being written up, and I'm afraid they're classified and we can't tell anybody about it at all.
 AL: Is Andy part of it?
 BEN: Is Andy part of our world domination?
 GARY: He is the world to me...You haven't asked us about football.
 AL: Do you like football?

BEN: Yes and tag wrestling.
 AL: Who do you support?
 BEN: Chelsea!
 AL: Strange coming from Leeds.
 BEN: I'm a natural-born Londoner.
 GARY: I support Manchester United.
 AL: Good. I like Cardiff.
 BEN: Oh dear, I'd keep that one quiet!
 A band I really like are Madness... The videos are excellent.
 AL: It would be good to interview them.
 GARY: They should do it...There's enough of them!
 AL: Any other cover versions lined-up?
 GARY: Roy Orbison...Perhaps Petula Clarke.
 BEN: We'd like to do an American tour with Motorhead!
 AL: What can you say to that?



Greenpeace

WHAT IS GREENPEACE?

Greenpeace is an international organisation committed to changing attitudes and opinions in the name of environmental defence. Its members believe in achieving 'green peace' through working with natural forces employing peaceful yet dramatic tactics and by drawing international attention to its cause.

Greenpeace is apolitical and has no membership as such. Supporters help the campaign and alert others to the aims of Greenpeace by actually joining in campaigns or by giving donations or by buying merchandise.

WHAT ISSUES ARE INVOLVED...

WHALING CAMPAIGNS.

Aimed at stopping the whaling operations throughout the world to prevent large-scale slaughter and ultimate extinction.

SAVING THE SEALS.

Licensed killing of young and adults take place, supposedly to safeguard worldwide fish stocks. The barbaric slaughter of seals regularly shown on T.V. and in the newspapers has created widescale condemnation of this bloodbath.

NUCLEAR POWER.

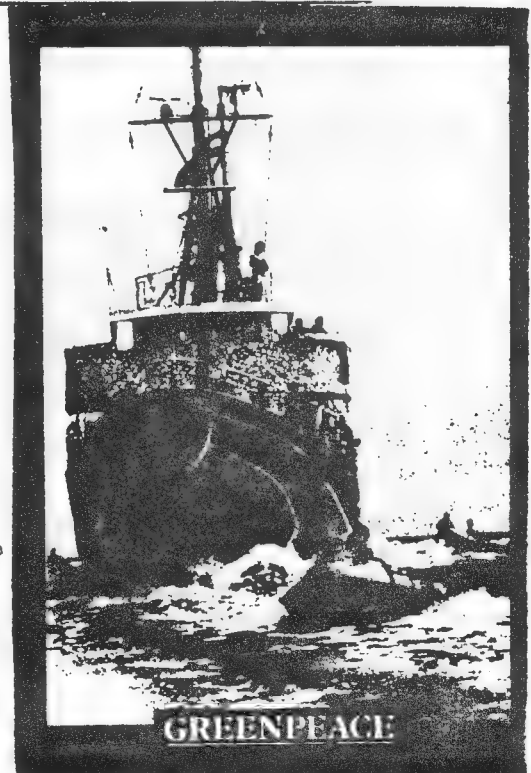
Radioactive waste dumped into the oceans remains potentially lethal for thousands of years, threatening both sea life and man. Greenpeace believes that nuclear power could be replaced by renewable energy sources. Nuclear power is no answer to 20th century problems—What will it take for government to realise this?

HOW YOU CAN HELP*

A minimum donation of £5 will put you on the Greenpeace mailing list for four campaign newsletters, info etc. Further information on whales, seals and nuclear power and the Comprehensive Test Ban can also be requested. Otherwise, write to Greenpeace for a list of merchandise—Every contribution helps the struggle to protect our future;

WRITE TO—

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 36, GRAHAM STREET.
 LONDON N1.
 Tel: 01.251.3020



The giant seal cull is called off

Greenpeace crew return bloody but unbowed

Rainbow Warrior returns

Greenpeace blockade hits waste dumping

MEMBERS of the Greenpeace

WHALE SAVERS IN GUN TERROR

Greenpeace claims victory diverting 'nuclear' cargo
 Environmentalists take a breather before



THE DANSE SOCIETY

The Danse Society in their current line-up have existed for two years consisting of Steve Rawlings on vocals, Lyndon Scarfe on keyboards, Paul Nash on guitar, Tim Wright on bass and drummer Paul Martin a.k.a Giggi.

Their music is best described as powerful but always full of subtle musical breaks. Giggi's powerful drumming forms a background to which swirling keyboards, bass-runs and guitar effects are added to blend in with the quieter but essential vocals of Steve Rawlings.

Based in Barnsley the band released several records on Pax (a Sheffield label) - 'There is no Shame in Death' and 'Woman's Own', before deciding to form their own Society Records, which has resulted in a six-track album 'Seduction', the single 'Clocks/Continent' and one of the best singles of 1983 'Somewhere/Hide'.

The band have worked hard to gain their achievements with constant gigging, great packaging of records and the music itself. The Danse Society are destined for greater success.

ARTIFICIAL LIFE talked to Steve, Tim and Giggi on one of their business visits to London.

AL: Before The Danse Society were you all in Barnsley-based bands? Is there a Barnsley scene as such?

TIM: There's not much of a Barnsley!

STEVE: It's just a place to live. It's good that there isn't a scene there really.

AL: Why do you think so many bands have come out of the North?

TIM: I think there's always been bands there but they're starting to get noticed now.

STEVE: I think it's because it's not happening in London that bands are getting more attention.

AL: Do you think that being out of London the pressure is taken off bands?

TIM: You don't get tied up in fashion. In London you've got the club thing.

STEVE: You can't help it because it's natural but out of London there aren't clubs...because there are clubs you get drawn into it...You don't realise it's happening and then you look and realise it's happening to you. Being based away from London you can watch what's going on and avoid it.

AL: Would you move to London?

STEVE: I don't know. It would be more convenient to move down here as the music business is situated down here. We have to spend quite a bit of time down here but once you're established I think you can move down to London because you don't have to move into the club thing.

AL: There seem to be quite a few bands that have sprung up and linked such as yourselves, Sex Gang Children and Southern Death Cult etc. Do you think the bands should be linked?

STEVE: There are all these bands that have sprung up but we haven't really sprung as we've been going for two years as Danse Society and four years altogether...developing all the time. We were doing gigs with UK Decay ages ago before all this movement thing and all of a sudden these are the bands to like...the music papers and the media latched on to it.

AL: Do you think the music papers have built it all up?

STEVE: I think they started it and some of the newer bands have seen it and tried to become part of it.

AL: What do you think of the 'positive punk' article in the NME?

TIM: Didn't like it...We've got nothing in common with bands such as Rubella Ballet, Brigandage etc. I don't think they've got anything in common with each other. I think it should be ignored.

STEVE: It's really elitist. He's saying that to thousands of people reading that and what he's said is gospel... People will think it's hip and buy their records.

AL: Do you see Danse Society changing direction at all?

STEVE: I don't think we'll change direction but we'll develop in the direction we're going.

TIM: The longer you play an instrument the better you get so your sound changes. You do progress, for example Southern Death Cult have now got some funky songs...They've developed.

AL: I think Danse Society stand apart from the other bands because you are more musical.

STEVE: I think the thing is we don't try and be part of any cult but some of the other bands want to be part of that cult because that's all they've got.

AL: There are lots of bands who have positive attitudes.

STEVE: Positive attitudes are alright if it's in an individual way.... an individual positive attitude but if they get together...

AL: ...It becomes a cult! The Alarm are good and have a positive attitude to their music and are doing quite well for themselves without being put in a category.

STEVE: Yes, I think they'll get a lot bigger.

TIM: A journalist could have put them in with us because they're a new up and coming band.

AL: Do you think the music press has too much power?

TIM: Yes, definitely.

STEVE: A lot of the time they don't even give fair reviews. They just give personal opinions.

TIM: Did you see the review of us with the Fall at the Lyceum? We were the worst band ever! I know

it wasn't a great gig but it wasn't that bad. The reviewer (Mick Sinclair) said we were the worst band he'd ever seen and that we were incredibly bad.

STEVE: A bit of a babbling thing to say. (laughs).

TIM: A lot of them reviewers succeed in not mentioning the gig but what Steve's hair is like etc.

AL: The music papers just knock bands down after building them up and unfortunately many people believe what they read.

STEVE: I think they do to a certain extent except in the case of New Order who have not had much press at all.

AL: By avoiding the music press they have created an interest about themselves.

STEVE: I can understand that! Why should they do interviews when there's going to be journalists trying to trip them up and pull them down all the time. I also read of Mark Smith's interview in Masterbag....He would make some comments and then the journalist would make it out to be the ultimate statement of the century...building a big thing out of an everyday comment.

AL: When you live out of London you are more influenced by the music press as it's the only form of communication about music.

STEVE: You hear people saying things about the music press and you think 'No, it can't be true' but then you realise.

TIM: A lot of it comes down to thinking about things and sussing them out.

STEVE: Another thing with the music press, particularly Sounds...It's really tacky in the way it's put together. No thought goes into the way reviews and articles are laid out.



Music for the Masses



TIM: Advertising is the first priority. If they were as enthusiastic as they are for the adverts it would be good.

STEVE: That's a good thing about a lot of fanzines...a lot more care is taken over how it's presented.

AL: Danse Society seem to be dominated by the music rather than the lyrics - what comes first?

STEVE: I think everything...it's held together. The music comes first and then we put the lyrics to the music, so the lyrics are the finishing touch.

AL: Are the lyrics important to you?
STEVE: Yes...Me and Lyndon write the lyrics.

TIM: It's 50-50, we've got some songs without lyrics.

AL: What inspires you to write?

STEVE: It's really hard to find inspiration, especially when the pressure's on to find some. We've got some new songs now, without lyrics and I've got to find some more lyrics quickly and I find it difficult.

AL: Some people believe that all bands should be saying something e.g; political, with their lyrics.

STEVE: I don't think it should be up to bands but to politicians or whatever to say...Music is for entertainment.

AL: Does that apply to all bands?

STEVE: Well it's up to them if they want to put politics in music. We don't particularly want to do that.

TIM: The lyrics aren't about everyday events or things but feelings.

STEVE: They're more about personal observations...personal politics. I think it's more personal but things that all people have a lot in common with...personal everyday thing that happen to everybody. There are no direct statements about anything, just observations about things that people may read and perhaps think 'that happened to me'.

AL: Do you purposely keep away from commenting on things, which so many bands seem to be doing now?

STEVE: I think if we feel strongly about something we'll put an indirect comment on it. 'Continent' has an indirect comment about people in power but not directly 'ban the Bomb' or something.

AL: So people have to search the lyrics?
STEVE: Yes but saying that...it's not really a deeper meaning.

TIM: We don't feel it's up to us to ram ideas into people's heads.

STEVE: Or tell them what to do.

TIM: They don't come to see us so that we can indoctrinate them with ideas.

AL: Why did you decide to form Society Records?

TIM: Well we needed to stimulate an interest in us.

STEVE: We were stuck up in Barnsley and had no contact or anything. We were working at the time so we put our money together and put a single out ('Clocks/Continent') and that's what started things off.

TIM: You see record companies aren't really bothered if they get a tape from up North as it's too much bother to go North to see a band.

STEVE: We had to work hard to get established in the first place because in London there's a sort of circle. If you're in that circle and you get a band you're accepted, friends will help you and things.

AL: By having your own label you've got more control.

STEVE: Yes.

AL: Do you see the label helping other bands in future?

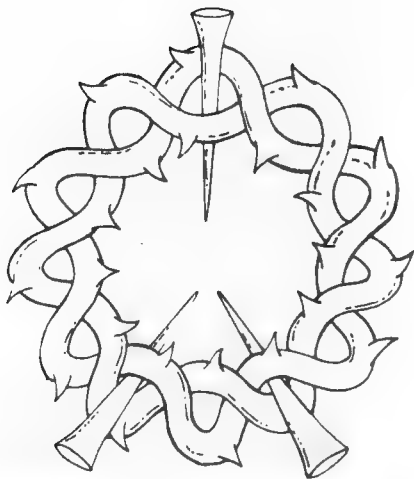
STEVE: Maybe in the future if Society Records continues.

TIM: We'd like to if we had the time and money.

AL: Do you see Society Records continuing or would you sign to a major record company?



Photo by MIKE LAYE



STEVE: We'll just have to see what happens. If we had the right sort of offer from a major, we'd sign if we had full control and were able to license Society Records so that it could be financed by them and run by us. It would be nice to keep it independent but it's really hard financially.

TIM: The majority of major record companies are shit. If they don't think you have commercial value they're not interested. It's only bands like Kajagoogoo that can get records out.

AL: One of the striking things about The Danse Society is the artwork- Who does it?

STEVE: I sort of do it. I get ideas to work from. The dancing man figure we've used since we started. It's important as we can choose what sleeves we want and they don't have photos of the band because some record company says so. We can do whatever we like. The sleeves cost a lot of money... There's no profit but it's establishing the band. It's no good worrying about fifty quids and that at this time so we put all the money back in to build it bigger.

AL: Is the artwork planned to compliment the music?

STEVE: We just want it to be interesting for people to look at.

TIM: A lot of indie bands put out sleeves and you can just tell that it's an indie band because they have shitty designed sleeves. A lot of thought does go into it regarding what sort of image we want to put across in sleeves.

AL: Is it important having your information service and writing to people?

STEVE: I think it is because if people are interested they deserve to know what's going on.

AL: 'Seduction' was a six-track album. Do you think the mini-album is a good idea?

STEVE: Yes, it was for us. We wanted it to be like a first album but we didn't, if you know what I mean.. We wanted to get an album out and across to people but not as an official full track album. It was very economical as well... not as much studio time.

AL: There are no fillers on the album.

TIM: Yeah, you get albums with five good tracks and the rest thrown together in the studio just to fill up.

STEVE: It's not really a mini-album.

TIM: There's half an hour of music and most albums are thirty-five minutes. At the time we did a six track but we couldn't have done a ten track.

AL: Were you happy with 'Seduction' as a first album?

STEVE: Yes, I think it was a first good album.

TIM: The mixing could have been a bit better but money was limited so we couldn't really go in a good studio.

STEVE: It served as a purpose introducing ourselves to people.

TIM: We're critical because we know that it can be better.

AL: When will the next one be done?

TIM: It will be done around the same time as the last one... September.

AL: What are your future plans?

TIM: World domination!

STEVE: We are going abroad... Holland in May and we're negotiating to go to Italy. We're trying to get across more in Europe.

AL: Do you think it's important?

STEVE: Yes, for us it is because we want to establish a long term thing whereas bands just getting established in this country will just fizzle out. It's important to build up from scratch in each country.

AL: You went to Holland last year- How did you find the audience?

STEVE: We went down really well in Holland.

TIM: In a lot of gigs there were just hippies!

STEVE: They're a lot more laid back and not as involved in things.

AL: Are you happy with what you've achieved so far?

STEVE: Yes I think so because it's taken us quite a while to build to this status but the time it's taken we've been learning more.

AL: What do you think of the music business.

STEVE: I don't really know enough about it to comment... From what I've seen I'm not really impressed by it. They don't know what they want and they just try and create things such as Kajagoogoo.

AL: Yes, they had to give tickets away outside when they played the Venue.

TIM: If a band is good you should be able to bring people to you rather than take yourselves to them.

STEVE: The only way to establish a band that's going to last is to pull the people round to your way of thinking... Then they will stick to you.

AL: Have you got any record companies after you?

STEVE: They come to the gigs but they're always humming and aahing. We haven't got the right crossover material. If we had nice haircuts and played a few more synthesizers.. then they'd like it... But bands such as Japan and Echo and the Bunnymen have established and grown to a worthwhile size. They are bands who have started something, stuck to it and drawn people to them.

AL: It's all down to survival, such as Simple Minds.

TIM: Their sound is solid. Their records sound as good today, if not better, than when they started. They've gradually brought people round to their way of thinking by making good records.

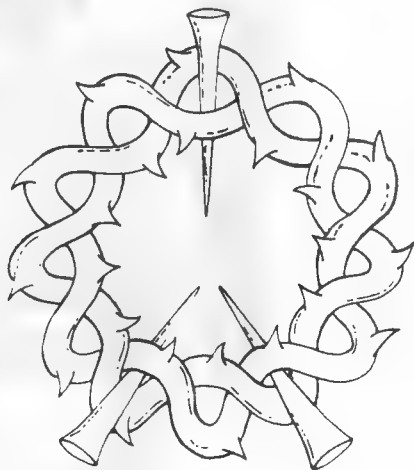
AL: Are there any bands who influence you?

TIM: Not really... We like Joy Division, New Order, Simple Minds. We listen to everything... I don't think it shows.

STEVE: They're not bands that influence us but each person in the band listens to different music and each individual gets influenced in a different sort of way. There's no direct influence on the Danse Society.

For bands to make any long term impact these days they need the ability to survive which is only achieved through hard work and a belief in the music. The Danse Society are doing this and will continue to do so... The Danse Society are survivors!

STOP PRESS: THE DANSE SOCIETY HAVE SIGNED TO ARISTA.



THE DANSE SOCIETY



Joolz



With her red hair, black clothes and studded wristbands, Joolz is a rather striking figure on stage as she reads her stories of everyday life, adopting various accents to emphasise characters. Her stories are very amusing but underneath they're quite serious and are the sort of stories people can identify with.

Joolz performs in all sorts of venues from youth clubs and rock gigs to vegetarian cabs which has resulted in her gaining quite a bit of attention, including the front cover of Time Out.

In the past, she has been married, belonged to a biker gang, been a tattooist's assistant and at present besides performing looks after Bradford band New Model Army, who she'll be touring with over the next few months.

ARTIFICIAL LIFE found itself in the wastelands of Wapping, talking to Joolz after her performance at the B2 Gallery.

AL: How would you describe yourself?

J: I just write stories. It's like in the Middle Ages when poets and storytellers used to stand on the marketcorner and people would come and listen....that's all I do really! Basically it's a throwback to the Middle Ages!

AL: So you wouldn't put yourself into a category?

J: No I guess I'm a storyteller poet or something.

AL: What do you think of the established poetry?

J: They do their own thing to their own audiences and get their Arts Council Grants to do it...well let them so long as they don't mess with me. I don't like when they start messing with me.

AL: Did you ever like the established poets such as McGough?

J: Oh yes, when I was younger. I read all the time. I read all kinds of things such as the backs of cornflakes packets.

I've always got four books going....one in the loo, one in the bedroom, one in the kitchen for when I'm cooking and one in the living room and with the T.V. and my drawing...I lead a full and active life (laughs). I used to like Roger McGough because he was funny!

AL: Tonight the audience seemed to be a poetry audience.

J: They all clapped on the right hand side but on the left they didn't clap at all! I was getting worried...I thought they must all be deaf on one side.

AL: The audience were sort of trendy.

J: I guess so. I play to all kinds of people...by accident.

AL: You're going to start gigging with New Model Army which will mean a different audience.

J: It will be the audience I started off playing to two years ago. I started off playing straight rock gigs by taking ten minutes of some poor unsuspecting band who had no idea of what I was doing and would never book me again. It will be like going back to my past. It's my roots, man! It will be a laugh but harder as rock audiences are not prepared to take shit whereas the audience tonight, for example, will take a lot of rubbish and just sit there and say 'Yes O.K.'...very polite people but a rock audience will throw cans at you.

AL: Do you hope to change people's ideas and make them aware of things?

J: I hope to because if I didn't I wouldn't do it. The chances are fairly slim (laughs) but you've got to try. If you're trying to get something across you've got to play to everyone and whip them into a bit of enthusiasm. It's the whole thing that if you're good enough everybody will listen. I wouldn't play a BM convention...I draw the line somewhere...They'd probably draw it on me!

AL: Sometimes it must be hard to find people on the poetry scene who are familiar with the subjects of your stories, e.g. majorettes?

J: I know. It does get a bit difficult.

AL: Majorettes are very common in South Wales.

J: You know what it's like. They're getting worse...they're now on rollerskates. You could turn it into a Tetley Bitterman song...majorettes meet the Tetley Bittermen.

AL: What do you think you're trying to do through your stories?

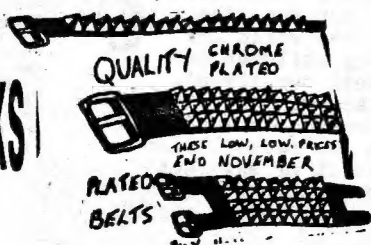
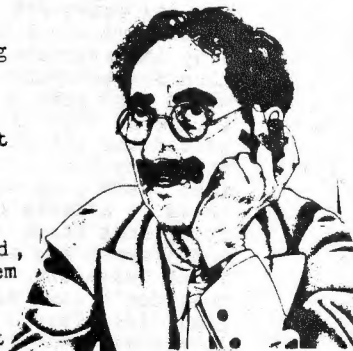
J: Make people see things! People spent all their lives wandering around and they don't want to look at anything that makes them uncomfortable. They don't want to see things that are happening because they live in their nice little world, not seeing anything. I want them to see things.

AL: Don't you think that they might just do it for ten minutes and then switch off?

J: Perhaps they do but then even it's ten minutes it's worth it. Sometimes I think why do I bother but you've got to try.

AL: Do you need motivation to keep you going?

J: I just have to look out the window and get motivation. Things just happen to you like you get beaten up or you go to a disco. If you plan or try and think 'let's write something trendy this week', nothing happens.





AL: Does your writing come easy ?
J: I don't think it's easy or hard...it's something you do! In comparison with working in a mill, it's piss easy...it's like a craft such as potting. I write bits all the time and stash things in my head. I tried keeping a pad by the side of my bed and writing down interesting thoughts...the next morning it was a pile of rubbish and totally pointless.

AL: What are your politics ?
J: I'm a socialist. I don't belong to any parties as I'm not a big joiner inner. I find once you join a party you have to stick to party line which I don't always agree with. It's best to just vote for the labour party because you've got to be realistic, there are only two parties in this country. You have to vote for the best of a bad bargain.

AL: What do you think of the present Labour Party ?
J: It's pretty naff but better than the Conservatives. I wish they'd get rid of Michael Foot as he's such a pain. Why can't we have Ken Livingstone for Prime Minister. He likes E.T. ..what more can you ask for ? He understands! If he led the Labour Party maybe they'd get somewhere.

AL: The press build up his image.
J: The press like to put him in a box so that it's for them writing at 5 in the morning, tomorrows newspaper. They can just write 'Red Ken' rather than something sensible. The country is controlled less by politicians and more by the media. It's run by clones who influence how people think. I didn't believe it until I got involved.

AL: What do you think of anarchy ?
J: In the real world if anarchy happened tomorrow it would last for six weeks and then someone would come along with a jackboot army and everyone would run to them for security and the fascists would just take over. Anarchy is a pile of shit. I'm sorry to offend the little anarchists out there who listen to the rubbish that CRASS pump out. It annoys me as it affects the way that young ones think...They're so indifferent and apathetic. I think Crass are well meaning but they don't have any contact with real life. They sit in that farmhouse dreaming life happily away and they're all nice rich people!

AL: Do you think your image is important ?
J: I don't really think about it. I am what I am. All my clothes and hair are home done, due to poverty. I would buy them if I could as I'm sick of the sewing machine but I don't think 'Gosh my image'. I'm just not a thinking person...I enjoy it and looking like this if I get bored I'd change.

AL: Your image is a good way of attracting attention.
J: It's useful as people think 'I remember her with red hair and black frock. This is a business.. ..show business is show business and you have to have some common sense. If you're a performer you have to perform well with integrity. If people pay £3 to see you, they deserve the best you can give them. You don't go on pissed or wreck it for other artists. You have to give the best you can even if there's only two people in the audience. It's very important to me! Also I'm a natural born show off and can't resist being on stage.

AL: Any plans for releasing records?
J: I've just done my demo of 'War of Attrition'. I'm going to get a record out as I've had six or seven offers from companies. I'll just go to the people I like best and who'll give me plenty of studio time. When I do the record it'll take a lot of work.. ..you can't bang down a track of music behind it as it's so unrhythmical so it'll have to be scored like a film score. I want to put sound behind it...rain coming down, a siren at the beginning and a faint subliminal heartbeat. The guys from New Model Army do the music for me.

AL: How did you become involved with New Model Army ?
J: My husband and I moved into this house with a guy who said he had a band. We thought it would be terrible but on seeing them I realised there was something there and they needed licking into shape so I kick their arses. I don't really manage them but I like doing business as it's amusing to me to get one over on someone who may think he's a clever businessman. It's like a game of chess!

AL: Why do you think Bradford and Leeds has produced so many bands and artists ?
J: I think it's such a boring place that you've got to do something else, otherwise you just go mad with boredom.

AL: Being older, you've done a lot of things in your time - does it give a better outlook on life ?
J: When things have happened to me, I didn't think 'Gosh I'm going through this and it will give me a good experience but I suppose on looking back I have had a varied life.

Any experience gives you a depth to draw...even if you can say to someone 'I wouldn't do that as I did it and it fucked me up!'. ..after saying that they'll either do it or not. I don't believe you should let people do what they want. A lot of young kids 12 - 13 don't like it as it makes them insecure. If you take away the security of knowing what time to be in and what time to eat,...a child that young will start fighting themselves as they can't fight you. The worst people in the world are people who say 'my children are free to lead their own lives', which is bollocks and just copping out of responsibilities to the children you made. Children will either take it or say fuck off and hate you but that's life!

AL: In the past you've said you were brought up on rock culture, - what bands do you like or have liked ?

J: I was...because everybody of my age was. There is no popular culture as in the Soviet Union where you get opera and ballets as a popular culture and is pushed as a popular culture. I actually like New Model Army a great deal. I like Moterhead, The Beat, Michael Jackson. I used to like Led Zeppelin and used to go and see really awful heavy metal bands...being a biker you like heavy metal and nothing else but I used to like soul records and my husband would go mad and say 'Don't dance to that' and would drag me off the dance floor. I used to like reggae and my husband used to go bonkers as it was skinhead music and we hated skinheads. The inter tribal warfare was horrendous. We used to have rucks and battles.

AL: Was it in the old days of the skinheads ?.....No!

AL: Was it in the old days of the skinheads ?

J: Yes, they were bootboys. We were against The Bilton Mafia.. ..BBB, which I thought stood for Big Beautiful Bilton and not Bilton Boot Boys. You didn't mix with skinheads...they were the same as us and just interested in fighting with razors and chains. Swells think he's a skin...they'd wipe the floor with him.

AL: I think Seething Wells will admit to not being hard.
J: He's sweet! Apart from the fact that he's in my bloody bathroom 24 hours a day and uses more loo roll than anyone I've ever met in my whole life. If he comes to my house I have to barricade myself in the bathroo because once he's in that bathroom you can't get him out. ..what he does in there I don't know!

AL: What are your future plans ?
J: World domination.

AL: How ?
J: Very hard...move into number 10 and take over her job. I don't know...I want to be as successful as I can with what I do and keep straight. I'll do everything that strikes my fancy and interest and do it to the best of my ability without compromising...well as much as I can...my aim in life is to pay the gas bill!

Men against women against men...

Yes, I like to think I'm committed
I feel I can really identify
I truly believe in our sister's cause
I'm sure, as a man, I can help
So many women aren't conscious enough
of the damage that's being done
They need someone with determination
To open their eyes to the truth
Someone to explain feminism to them
And guide their thoughts correctly
Though I say to myself
Who better than I
Founder of the campus
Men against sexism crèche
To explain things to them, logically
Yes, what these poor misguided women need
is a man, to organise and lead them -
And anyway, it's the only way I seem
To get laid these days.....

COCTEAU TWINS

A SKY FOR THE SACRED.

INTERVIEW BY JONH WILDE. (strange way of spelling your name! - ED)

In 1982, even the independent/alternative charts generally lacked challenge, originality and an element of the unlikely and the unexpected. One exception was the Cocteau Twins three-track EP (containing Feather Oar Blades, All But An Ark Lark and Alas Dies Laughing). That was followed later in the year by their self-produced debut LP, Garlands, like the single on 4AD Records (a label that thankfully always has faith in the realm of the improbable.

The Cocteau magnificent improbability lies in their deceptive frailty - as the bare potential of drum-machine, Elizabeth's capricious, uncertain vocal, Robin's erratic splashes of incisive guitar and Will's understated, meandering bass, together give the Cocteau Twins sound its swirling ethereal and devastatingly EXCEPTIIONAL strength....

ROBIN We don't strive to create an ORIGINAL sound, neither do we try to sound like any band. Sometimes, we MIGHT come up with something that does remind us of somebody else - then that will be thrown out. Hopefully, up to that point, it's an uncontrived sound.'

Just released on 4AD is the latest Cocteau offering - a 12 inch, three-track EP containing 'Peppermint Pig', 'Laugh Lines' and 'Hazel', produced by Associate Alan Rankine. Bassist Will, typically Cocteau in his modest and self-disarming way, criticises the latest release for its 'incoherence' and lack of immediacy. Perhaps Rankine's production has failed to harness the true commercial potential and the real edge of their potent disorder, but nevertheless its frantic dash to the twilight fringe between light and dark has all the intoxicating spirit of adventure, love, and the dreams of children.

The positive thrill of the Cocteau dance chapter owes much of its stunning impact to Elizabeth's vocal contortions - its bewildered, tense inflections giving the songs their haunted sense of beauty. Elizabeth's lyrics are a curious array of ill-defined images and ideas.....

ELIZABETH 'In the NME piece, I said something to the effect that the sound of my lyrics is more important than the actual meaning. Well, that's true some of the time, but it tends to change. The lyrics are never written like direct translations of experience, usually they're not a point of view or anything - just words and thoughts that might provoke something.'



With 'Peppermint Pig', they will consolidate their position in terms of sales and appeal but it is questionable whether it will actually further their exciting potentiality. 'Garlands' was all about a latent possibility, perhaps only hinting at the true potency of their dramatic surge of crashing drums, a ragged edge of guitar, Will's fluid bass and Elizabeth's vocal winding and turning..... twisting and turning. At that point, it seemed that they were on the verge of GREATNESS and this latest release maintained rather than excelled. We touched on the motivation for being the Cocteau Twins.....

ROBIN 'there is a sense of challenge in being in the band and it is exciting to be the Cocteau Twins, but always for different reasons.... a year ago, the prospect of recording in a studio was thrilling.... then other things become important-but at the moment, the actual purpose of what we do and what motivates us to do it is not often considered - perhaps it will begin to be questioned more as we develop; there always has to be an element of challenge to make it worthwhile though.... to spur us on to the next step. At present it is the prospect of the OMITD tour and all that entails'.

The Cocteau Twins are currently supporting OMITD through Europe, which should give them some well-deserved exposure.

Up to now, although they have a growing following, they have had very little press. The Cocteau Twins are one of those rare bands that seem unconcerned with a carefully contrived presentation or a ready eagerness to cross the t's and dot the i's on their ultimate purpose. They are not the easiest of bands to interview (at present the opportunity to discuss their intentions beyond the surface - tours, records.... meets with blank looks and much groping in the darkness for the right words) but those innocent intentions make a welcome change from the stream of stale piss that is most 'rock' music with its seriousness too often spilling over into hollow pretentiousness.

ROBIN 'we don't want to be closeted in that way, but we won't deliberately try to avoid being 'rock' or whatever. We don't think about any approach like that - we know, for a fact, that we are too naive about most things. Most aspects of it just overwhelm us at the moment.... strange things, like people starting to follow our gigs etc..... that seems incredible just now. The end of ambition just now, IS just the next record or the next gig. The Cocteau Twins CAN be taken too seriously. We don't really deliberate over the dilemma of whether we're Art or Entertainment. It's too fine a line anyway.... but if anything we would like to be ON that line.'

One aspect that they are concerned about is the dissatisfaction that they feel with most of their live performances, typically underestimating their REAL POWER and the full potential of their simmering turbulence. The Cocteau Twins, uncoiling to show up their entranced fascinations in their faint half-shadows, ARE on the verge of GREATNESS - live and on record. Live, they suspect that their subtleties are too blurred to be exciting in that live context with its (sometimes) stifling limitations and its demands for a visual impact. But, with the Cocteau, their subtleties are a veiled strength. Like all the best 'Rock Music', it veers away from the obvious, rarely lapses into cliché and always resists the lure of a colourless conformity.

They remain an anonymous, elusive group simply because their music is born from a need which has nothing to do with Rock's Decayed Egotism - its flagrant pretence and its lack of challenge. The Cocteau Twins' natural distance will only alienate you if you seek the truth from icons, rather than use good rock music as a catalyst for thought, sensation and ACTION - which it can be. Falkirk's Cocteau Twins will be mighty..... The true 'bluer skies'... the sky for the sacred.



ARTIFICIAL LIFE
FANZINE

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Artificial Life

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